



SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS CLUSTER

July 2-3, 2022 – 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)
Reverend Zaverio Banasula, Administrator

St. Mary Catholic Church

109 Beech Ave., PO Box 1724
Coeburn VA 24230

Saturday Vigil Mass 4 PM

St. Therese Catholic Church

16661 Wise St., PO Box 56
St. Paul VA 24283

Sunday Mass 8:30 AM

Good Shepherd Catholic Church

890 W Main St., PO Box 730
Lebanon VA 24266-0730

Sunday Mass 11 AM

Cluster Contact Information

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Website: www.spiritofthemountain.org

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Spirit-of-the-Mountain-Cluster-107130504274408>

Readings for this Week (July 3-9, 2022)

03 JULY SUN: Isaiah 66:10-14; Psalm 66; Galatians 6:14-18; Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

04 JULY MON: Hosea 2:16-18, 21-22; Psalm 145; Matthew 9:18-26

05 JULY TUE: Hosea 8:4-7, 11-13; Psalm 115; Matthew 9:32-38

06 JULY WED: Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12; Psalm 105; Matthew 10:1-7

07 JULY THU: Hosea 11:1-4, 8-9; Psalm 80; Matthew 10:7-15

08 JULY FRI: Hosea 14:2-10; Psalm 51; Matthew 10:16-23

09 JULY SAT: Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 93; Matthew 10:24-33

Scripture for next Sunday, July 10, 2022 – 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Deuteronomy 30:10-14; Psalm 60; Colossians 1:15-20; Luke 10:25-37

NOTE from Father Xavier: “I want to thank people for all the various kinds of support, and I am looking forward to working with everyone.”

SAVE THE DATE: July 31 (SUNDAY) NOON has been set as the day for our cluster picnic. This year, 2022, the cluster picnic will be at the Lebanon Community Center Park (behind the First Bank & Trust Company, 359 West Main Street). There will be bingo, corn hold, splash pad,

volleyball, and maybe softball and of course we hope plenty of food. Our picnic committee is excited—for food details see Ruby Dorton at Good Shepherd, Betty Meade at St. Therese, and Donna Bates at St. Mary.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY: Next Friday, June 29, Father Xavier celebrates his 9th anniversary of his ordination. We are all blessed to have him serving our cluster for the past almost six years—even if some of that time he could not serve us sacramentally.

WORD AMONG US: The Word Among Us booklets for July/August are at the back of the church, free for the taking—both English and Spanish versions are available.

SACRAMENTS: Please contact to make arrangements for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony as well as funerals.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS: “The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few.” Are you called to be a laborer for Christ as a priest? Call the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, to speak with Fr. Brian Capuano; or write to vocations@richmonddiocese.org.

Parish Safety Webinar. Recently the Diocese presented a webinar to assist in general preparedness and to provide additional information regarding available resources in light of the abortion-related Supreme Court decision and the recent, tragic, shootings in the U.S. This webinar was planned in collaboration with the Virginia Fusion Center, a partnership between the Virginia State Police and Virginia’s Department of Emergency Management. It tells how to recognize suspicious behavior and what to do about it. Also offered is information on additional resources and a discussion of the work of the Virginia Fusion Center. If you wish to view the webinar please go to <https://extranet.richmonddiocese.org/risk-management/>. If you have questions and/or problems viewing the webinar, please contact the church office.

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ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

June 25 Offertory	\$ 585.00	Attendance 14
Votive Candles Offering	\$ 4.00	

PRAYERS REQUESTED: Alton Lawson, Jr., Sister Stacey Hanrahan, Lillie Peters, Billy Hunsaker, Charles Bennett, Jim Hatch

July Birthdays: Rachael Bates (6), Alton Lawson, Jr. (22), Gregory Perry (24), and Patty Nauss (27).

- After the July 2nd 4 PM Vigil Mass all are invited to join the family in celebrating the **50th wedding anniversary of Terry and Donna Bates** with a **reception** of cake and punch prepared by their daughter-in-law Gayle. During Mass the couple will receive a special blessing from Father Xavier.

- Thank you to all who remained after Mass last Saturday evening to show Father Tim the Church's thanks for celebrating Mass during Father Xavier's absence.

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ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

PRAYERS REQUESTED: Margaret Meade, Jackie and Scotty White, Helen Moretz, Danny Laney, Tom Lusk, Marty Jessee, and Chuck Stone

July Birthdays: Angel Cardenas (14), Bill White (20), Bj Molinary (28), and Marty Huber (31).

- It is fitting this Sunday's first Mass to be celebrated at St. Therese in a while will be followed with their **first of the month parish breakfast** – all are welcome to come and celebrate Father Xavier's return and the opening of the doors at St. Therese for Sunday morning Mass.

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GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

June 26 Offering	\$ 670.00	Attendance 21
Votive Candle Donations	\$ 1.45	

PRAYERS REQUESTED: James White, Bob Dorton, Danny Laney, and Jackie & Scotty White

July Birthdays: Kelly Gilmer (2), Francisco Hernandez (12), Ruby Dorton/Maggie Lindvall (14), Ximena Onate (18), Taylor Settle (24), Ronnie Gilmer (27), and Shyann Hubbard (30).

- The **Good Shepherd parish pastoral council** has lost several members over the past several years. Parishioners are called to prayerfully consider **sharing** their **time** and talent by stepping up to **serve on your church council**. The parish pastoral council sets goals and objectives of the parish as determined by the pastor and should include the needs of the parishioners in the areas of liturgy, religious education, community concerns and family life, etc.
- The **basket** for your **offertory donation** as usual is at the back of the church.

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MOTHER AND FATHER

Melanie B. Coddington

This Sunday's reading from Isaiah just might make half the assembly squirm and the other half blush, as it announces the rebirth of Jerusalem in the earthy tones of womanhood. God's life-giving generosity comes across in imagery so feminine ("suck fully," "milk of her comfort," "nurse with delight," "abundant breasts") it practically sings off the page in a motherly mezzo-soprano. Regardless of our post-modern modesty, such language made good sense to our ancestors in faith.

In ancient Mediterranean culture, mothers typically nursed their children for several years, with boys, the favored offspring, kept at the breast longer than girls. For people living off the land, prosperity meant abundant milk and healthy children; scarcity meant scanty milk and infant mortality. Thus, milk appears often in the Hebrew Testament as a sign of plenty.

For example, throughout the desert journey of Israel, the promised land of Canaan carries along the hopeful description "flowing with milk and honey." Isaiah 55's opening

invitation, “All you who are thirsty, come to the water!” concludes with the phrase, “drink wine and milk!” Where does all this milky talk take us? To a stunning conclusion: The Lord God claims the role of mother to Israel (and to us), saying today, “...as a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you....”

In a not-so-subtle effort to balance things out, the framers of the Lectionary pair this reading with verses from Psalm 66 that speak of “tremendous deeds” and God ruling “by his might.” Familiar references to Exodus (“He has changed the sea into dry land...”) and Israel’s entry into the Promised Land (“...through the river they passed on foot...”) round out the solid, masculine imagery. Only the final line hints at a softer side: “Blessed be God who refused me not my prayer or his kindness!”

The second reading, from the final verses of St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians, builds on last Sunday’s selection from the same book. (In Ordinary Time, second readings come from New Testament books read in course, meaning the selections appear in the Lectionary in the order that they appear in the Bible.) Paul says here, “For neither does circumcision mean anything, nor does uncircumcision, but only a new creation.” Translation: When it comes to salvation, what we humans do means nothing; what God does means everything.

Based on the context of conflict that Paul describes throughout his letter to the Galatians, “circumcision” here stands for adherence to the law of Moses. Against those who would require Gentile believers to observe the Jewish law, Paul has argued that all of us are saved by God’s grace, freely and generously given. We do not earn it.

For Paul, adherence to law too easily leads to reliance on ourselves, rather than on God—on human effort, rather than on God’s grace. This is the “yoke of slavery” that we heard about in last Sunday’s second reading. Galatians 5:4 makes his point clear: “You are separated from Christ, you who are trying to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”

Remember: In Paul’s own life, strict adherence to the law had led to self-righteous judgment of others and estrangement from God. He speaks from experience. Relying on rules, we build walls in relationship, dividing ourselves from God and from people.

St. Paul’s theme of reliance upon God carries through to today’s gospel. Jesus sends out the seventy-two to proclaim the kingdom of God in deed and word. Dispatched in pairs, these disciples go ahead of Jesus into the towns and villages he intends to visit. He tells them to take nothing extra along for their upkeep, but to rely on the abundance of God’s providence, made manifest in the generous hospitality of ordinary people. Embracing this risky mode of travel-in-trust, they enjoy surprising success and return rejoicing. God has proved trustworthy, both in caring for their needs, and in accomplishing his mighty deeds through them.

The Spirit of the Mountain Cluster and our Bishop Knestout encourages anyone aware of sexual abuse of minors on the part of clergy or staff of our diocese to notify civil authorities, call the Attorney General’s Clergy Abuse Hotline at 1-833-454-9064 and reach out to the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-877-887-9603, or visit the Safe Environment page at <https://richmonddiocese.org/protecting-gods-children/>